1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

Post Oak Jim described the details of the process as he remembered it in his band, the Antelope, in slightly different terms. The novice collected his own feathers—one for each coup claimed and one for each successful raid participated in. After his first four notable deeds had drawn the attention of the ţékniwap class, he was nominated for ceremonial distinction. The special tipi was raised and the warriors sat as before. The candidate was invited to come to the meeting by the announcer. He sat beside the chief and was told the duties and dangers of a war leader. Then he smoked before the chief gave him four feathers from the tail of the eagle. "From that point on his rank is raised." But he did not yet wear his feathers; they were carefully hoarded until by forty-eight coups he had stripped the tails of four eagles. The feathers were then made into a war bonnet. In a second and more important ceremony it was conferred upon the fighter. He was thereafter considered ţékniwap, a true war chief.

Friends could help a comrade along by transferring to him war honors which were theirs by right. Nothing could more clearly attest both the legal and the property aspects of accorded honor-claims. The gracious act was not unusual. It was done in public in order that the recipient's right to the honor would be witnessed and duly recognized. It was considered best if the giver of the honors announced a dance, inviting all members of the band to be there. At the end of a dance the host called for a halt. Then he walked to the center of the dance ring. There, in the presence of all people, he swore before the Sun and the Earth, who had witnessed the killing of the enemy, that the deed was his. He concluded by saying, "I now give this to my brother, ————————." The man named then stood and claimed the deed, with the following words, "I now take this deed. Sun, Father, Moon above, and Earth, Mother, witness ye that it is mine. *I* killed this man." The drum was struck a resounding blow. Turning to the people, he then called upon them to recognize his coup, and the transfer was complete.

But the transfer of war honors had a wise limitation. They could be neither sold nor inherited. They might be bestowed only as a gift, in the above manner. They were given only to brave men to help them towards the war leader status, or to a peace chief who had no war honors.[10]

Even in bands in which formal installation was established, there was also a much less official alternative open for attaining a war bonnet, though of a lower order. This was the buffalo scalp hat, which could be worn by a

[10] Professor Ralph Linton suggests that this practice may have emerged only since the advent of reservation days, when the restrictions upon fighting, imposed by the whites, made the coup a commodity of scarcity, so that the ingenious Comanche devised the technique here described. We are unable to pass upon the question of the specific antiquity of the custom.

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the horse, but he didn't do anything. Apparently he did not believe he had an established right to his horse, or we should have seen a more typical Comanche reaction to the killing. 675 756

Nevertheless, when no fee had been indicated in advance, Comanche doctors were happy to receive gifts. But the true professional spirit prevailed, for it is said that if people were too poor to give gifts, it was of little concern to the medicine man. "He was glad to help out." But who knows perfection? Some medicine men hid when they thought they were going to be called upon for charity. However, if a female relative of a sick pauper asked the wife of a desired medicine man where the doctor might be, she she was "custom-bound" to tell.

While women were a nuisance in this way, medicine men had another way with others of them. A doctor could dream that if a certain woman came to ask for his help, the sick person would surely get well, providing the woman did his bidding during the cure. This is reputed to have been a not uncommon practice. Some of the more unscrupulous practitioners used it as a ruse to seduce reluctant women of their fancy, we were told. But whether a woman *had* to aid, or what she received for it, could not be determined.

On the other end of the contract, what happened when the promised fee was not given after the cure had been made? The Comanche practitioners were without legal means of restitution.

A Comanche of mean disposition would in native opinion have had recourse to sorcery, "but the honorable medicine man would forget it." Persons who failed to pay explicit fees, however, were the ones the doctors dodged, while the creditor medicine man never again took a case for the defaulters. The result was a normal, but guild-manifestation, of Malinowski's principle of withdrawal of reciprocal services in reprisal for deficiency of conduct.

The sale and transfer of supernatural powers among the Comanches was a form of contract in incorporeal property rights. As between close friends and relatives the offer and acceptance was informal and direct. It was when an ambitious youth yearned to purchase power of a strong medicine man with whom he had no close kinship that more formal steps were taken. First steps were taken by the neophyte's mother. She approached the head wife of the shaman. The woman thought it over. Then she learned from her husband what gifts would be required to satisfy him. These she described in detail to the mother at a later time. Anything within reason could be asked for, for "no matter what it costs them, they are going to have that medicine." 675 756 425

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When the proper gifts had been collected, the boy's father loaded them upon a horse; he led it to the medicine man's lodge and tethered it a short way east of the tipi. Walking about the tipi counterclockwise in ceremonial custom, he passed through the door to be recieved by the shaman. Sitting by the medicine man at the west side of the lodge, the father offered smoke and stated the purpose of his visit. If the medicine man took the smoke it was an acceptance and the deal was closed.

The "sale" of power, it should be added, was not an alienation of the right of the original owner to use it himself. Our closest analogy is the revelation of a trade secret, use of which requires special talent. What the "seller" did was to prepare the neophyte in such a way that the guardian spirit of the medicine man would provide a vision visitation in which the power itself would be bestowed. No mortal could give supernatural power. He could merely lend his influence to lead to a cut-in.

The purchase of medicine was only a start on the road to success for young men. The most potent powers were never shared. Indeed, it was only when a shaman had more than one medicine that he was willing to sell an access to one of them. Then it was always his poorer. The presumable motivation is that prestige rests in rarity.

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

understand. It was brief—unusually so—and terminated without any damage, very much to my relief.

After the ceremony, I was conducted to the tent of one of the Spotted Leopard's wives, of whom he also had four. This was especially appropriated to the accommodation of Big Wolf, and inasmuch as I had always slept in the same tent with him at home, he did not think proper to alter the programme on this occasion.

In the morning, a large number of mules and horses were collected in the square, driven in from the surrounding pasture by the women. Piles of buffalo, deer, and beaver skins, also, were brought from the tents and packed on mules. I was then brought out by Big Wolf, who produced the bloody stick and delivered it to the Spotted Leopard, at the same time informing me I had been sold and assigned. To render the transfer legal, however, it became incumbent on me to reopen the vein on the back of my hand, and again stain the carved figures with blood, an act which, in view of the alternative of being butchered, I performed with great alacrity. This formality closed the bargain, when Big Wolf and his warriors departed, taking with them the avails of the sale. In this business transaction, I had the satisfaction of learning how much, in Indian estimation, I was worth, to wit: 120 animals, old and young, of the horse kind, and as many skins as three pack mules could carry.

From the first I entertained an inveterate dislike of the Spotted Leopard. He was morose, reserved, unsocial, and there was a malignant expression about his mouth and eyes that told me as plainly as if it had been written in emphatic English on his forehead that he was a being who would delight in cruelty. These were my first impressions of him, and I never had occasion to modify them afterwards. But

24: Richardson H-4 (no date) 1929 NO6 Comanche NO6
(1854-1859) Texas

both reservations by storm. But sufficient forces were not forthcoming and the "Army of Defense," as the frontiersmen had called themselves, disbanded for a time. Their fury was allayed somewhat by the act of the governor in appointing a board of commissioners to visit the camp of the citizens and endeavor to work out a peaceful method of attaining their ends. The commission visited the frontier communities, heard the complaints of the angry citizens and in their report of findings quite naturally declared the Indians guilty of the offenses charged.[42] But Baylor and other frontier leaders kept up the agitation and, in order to prevent another gathering, G. B. Erath, one of the governor's commissioners, called out a special force of one hundred militiamen from McLellan and Bell counties in order to assure the citizens that the Indians were being watched.[43] However, from all accounts it seems that the frontiersmen did not propose to leave to others the matter of watching the Indians and during the last few weeks preceding the removal the Indians of both reservations were harassed on every hand and dared not leave their agencies to gather up their animals, many of which were out on the range. On one occasion a fight occurred near the Comanche reservation in which both the Indians and citizens suffered some injuries.

Authority for the immediate removal of the Indians was finally granted on June 11 and on July 31, the Indians from both reservations, escorted by United States soldiers started on their journey to the valley of the Washita in Indian Territory.

The census made at the time the journey was begun showed that 1112 Indians left the Brazos reservation and 384 Comanches left the upper reservation. It was estimated that the Comanches took away with them live stock worth $9,550, and that they lost, or were forced to leave behind, live stock worth in the aggregate of $14,922.50.[44] The cost of both reservations to the United States Government had ranged between $61,655.25, for 1857, and

42. Report of John Henry Brown, G. B. Erath, J. M. Steiner, J. M. Smith and Richard Coke, to Governor Runnels, Waco, June 27, 1859. Thirty-sixth Congress, Second Session, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 2, pp. 665-671.

43. Erath to Ross and Neighbors, June 20, 1859. Thirty-sixth Congress, First Session Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 2, p. 663.

44. Neighbors' Memorandum, no date. Ms. University of Texas photostat copy.